



# SR 12 Safety Construction

The drive on SR 12 from Suisun City to Rio Vista is gradually changing these days. The open fields, rolling hills and giant wind turbines are the same, but a 12.5 mile stretch of the roadway is partially hidden by construction equipment, safety barriers and orange fencing.

Caltrans is spending \$23.3 million over the next few months to make safety improvements to the portion of SR 12 from just outside of Suisun City to Currie Road. The work includes straightening out some of the sharper curves, trimming the top off of some hills while filling in the dips in some gullies, improving the ability of stormwater to flow under the road, and adding shoulders where none exist. When the work is completed in late 2010, the roadway will include standard 12-foot travel lanes and eight foot shoulders, as well as the temporary fiberglass "channelizes" that



help remind drivers not to cross over the center line.

This project is entirely funded by the State of California through SHOPP (State Highway Operations and

Protection Program) funds – a portion of the state gas tax guaranteed to go to roadway maintenance, rehabilitation and safety projects.

None of the work done in 2009 involves laying down new pavement. Instead, 2009 grading and drainage work sets the stage for paving in 2010. During the winter of 2009-10, most work will stop because of winter rains and muddy ground. But in the spring of 2010, the project will ramp up again, and by the end of 2010 a portion of SR 12 will be much safer than it has been.

In addition to improvements from Walters to Currie Road, Caltrans is scheduled to start a similar project in 2011, improving SR 12 from Currie Road east to Druin Drive in Rio Vista. Caltrans plans to widen and improve the shoulders from Azevedo Road to Liberty Island Road in 2011.



## Enforcement Continues to Make a Difference



In late 2006, the STA adopted a 4-step strategy to reduce accidents and fatalities on SR 12. The first step was to increase enforcement activities along SR 12, in order to allow time for more permanent solutions such as road improvements to take effect.

The CHP and local law enforcement agencies responded by immediately increasing the number of patrol units along SR 12, and more aggressively writing tickets. The California Office of Traffic Safety provided a special one-year grant to fund additional CHP officers to patrol the corridor from I-80 to I-5 near Stockton.. There are three main lessons that have been learned from this effort:



- Most SR 12 traffic violators are local residents
- Most citations are for speeding
- Frequent, visible law enforcement presence gets people to slow down

Even though the Office of Traffic Safety grant is no longer in effect, the Solano office of the CHP is still dedicating extra officers to SR 12. So far, there have been 44 vehicle crashes on the Solano County portion of SR 12 in 2009, resulting in 1 fatality and 33 injuries. This is a significant reduction since this effort started.

## Emergency Vehicle Behind Me - What Do I Do???

SR 12 is too narrow in many places for drivers to pull off of the road, even if an emergency vehicle is approaching with siren and flashing lights. What do you do?

The answer is to **drive normally** until you can **pull off of the road**, and then do so. **Don't speed up** – you put yourself and other drivers at risk if you drive above the speed limit. **Don't slow down** – that just delays the emergency response. And **don't try to pull over if there is not enough room**; the emergency vehicle can't pass, and the slowed or stopped traffic is a danger to everyone.



# Driving Tips to Stay Alive!!

## Don't forget these **5** safe driving tips:

- Don't drink and drive!
- Don't cross the double yellow line.
- Be visible.
- Focus on driving.
- Watch your speed.

During the year-and-a-half time period for construction of the SR 12 improvements, safe driving techniques are especially important. Here are two new considerations:

**Reduce Your Speed** – the speed limit on SR 12 has been reduced to 45 mph from just east of Suisun City to Currie Road. The lanes are narrower, visibility is reduced, and construction and equipment is right next to the travel lanes. Drive slower – it's safer, and it's the law.

**Be Ready to Stop** – Most of the work is to the side of the road, but sometimes equipment and personnel cross into the travel lanes. Where this is a possibility, the contractor has flagmen to control the flow of traffic. When you are in the construction area, watch for the flagmen or for slowing or stopped traffic.



## Cell Phone Users:

Program CHP Dispatch into your speed dial:

**707-551-4100**

Call to report reckless drivers you witness while driving.

## Studies for Future Improvements

### Rio Vista Bridge Improvement and Relocation Study

STA and the City of Rio Vista are studying alternatives for the SR 12 lift bridge across Sacramento River. SR 12 congestion is compounded when the center section of the bridge is lifted to allow boats to cross under the bridge, especially large ships travelling to and from the Port of Sacramento. The study will:

- compare bridge replacement and bridge widening alternatives
- identify feasible alignment alternatives, including the existing alignment and alternative alignments north and south of the Rio Vista Airport and south of Rio Vista
- investigate local design preferences

The first phase of the study will be completed this fall.



### SR 12 Corridor Study (from I-80 to I-5)

The most dangerous portion of SR 12 (from I-80 to I-5) runs through 3 counties, 3 cities, 3 Caltrans districts, crosses 3 draw bridges, and is split between 2 CHP districts. This area has seen 6 fatalities since the start of 2007.

Over the past year, the STA has coordinated with Caltrans, San Joaquin and Sacramento Area Councils of Government (SJCOG, SACOG) and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to craft a scope of work for making SR 12 a safer and more effective roadway. The study will look at safety and road capacity issues, coordination of improvements between the three counties, and environmental issues such as the potential impact of rising sea levels.

The study will cost almost \$1 million. Caltrans is providing half of those funds, with the remaining funds to be provided by STA, MTC, SJCOG, and SACOG. Once the study is completed, it will position SR 12 for state and regional funds.

## SR 12 Steering Committee



The SR 12 Steering Committee was tasked by the STA Board to identify additional safety improvements and options for funding, and increasing public awareness of the safety concerns on SR 12. The members of the Committee are:

Jan Vick, Chair (Mayor, City of Rio Vista)  
Harry Price (Mayor, City of Fairfield)  
Pete Sanchez (Mayor, City of Suisun City)  
Jim Sperring (Supervisor, Solano County)  
Mike Reagan (Supervisor, Solano County)

## Next Meeting:

Date TBD

Location Pending



## SR 12 STATUS

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707-424-6075

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For up-to-date information on ongoing activities to improve safety on SR 12, go to the STA website:

**[www.solanolinks.com](http://www.solanolinks.com)**